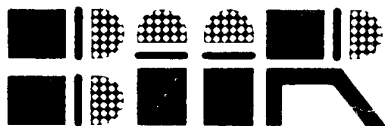


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Belgian Media Review

Prepared by USIS Press Section

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1. MAJOR STORIES

- SHULTZ-SHEVARNADZE MEETING: Their two -- reportedly unsuccessful -- meetings receive prominent coverage under such headings as: "Shultz and Shevardnadze Separate Without Result" (liberal catholic De Standaard -circ. 353,000); "Shultz and Shevardnadze, Disappointed, Leave Vienna" (Socialist De Morgen (circ. 43,000); "They Could Not Follow Up On Reykjavik" (conservative Het Laatste Nieuws -circ. 311,000); "In Vienna, The Super Powers Confirmed Reykjavik: The Failure, Not The Hopes" (independent Le Soir -circ. 224,000); "Star Wars Jeopardized Everything" (conservative La Dernière Heure -circ. 115,000).

Foreign Minister Tindemans' address to the CSCE review conference is reported by liberal catholic De Standaard (circ. 353,000) and conservative catholic La Libre Belgique (circ. 90,000).

- BELGA STRIKE: The conflict at Belga news agency has taken a more serious twist following the reported threat of a director to close down the agency entirely.
- BBC REFUTES TORY CHARGES OF BIASED REPORTING OF U.S. RAID AGAINST LIBYA

2. OTHER ITEMS

American Journalist Reveals Alleged "Contragate"

-- Socialist De Morgen (circ. 43,000) and Labor catholic Het Volk (circ. 205,000) report on a press conference held in Brussels by American journalist Tony Avirgan, said to be free-lancing for CBS, BBC and the Sunday Times. Avirgan reportedly claims that a two-year investigation by him has demonstrated that the 1984 bomb attempt in a Nicaraguan rebel camp, during which Eden Pastora was seriously wounded and three journalists were killed, was carried out by a CIA sponsored "dirty tricks" cell within the anti-Sandinist FDN rebel group. The journalist also alleges that this group intended to commit a terrorist attack against the U.S. Ambassador in Costa Rica, for which the Sandinistas would then be blamed, but that the attempt was averted thanks to information he passed on to Costa Rican authorities. Avirgan further asserts that the DEA also is involved in attempt to compromise the Sandinistas with Columbian cocaine traffickers.

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3. COMMENTARY

- CSCE: In Conservative catholic La Libre Belgique (circ. 90,000), Michel Rosten remarks ironically: "After the Reykjavik famous triumph, the resounding success of the Soviet-American talks held Wednesday afternoon and Thursday morning in Vienna deserves to be hailed." Recalling that what Secretary Shultz had termed a "failure" in Reykjavik had become a "great success" the following day, Rosten adds: "To explain this metamorphosis, the NATO foreign ministers explained that Messrs. Reagan and Gorbachev had tabled important proposals and that it would be difficult for them to retreat. Apparently this reasoning has been refuted by facts because, Thursday morning, Messrs. Shultz and Shevardnadze separated in total disagreement about SDI and about the means to reach a nuclear arms reduction."

Quoting Mr. Shevardnadze as saying that his meeting with Mr. Shultz had left him a "bitter taste", and that the U.S. has retreated from its Reykjavik positions, Rosten adds: "If the Soviet minister is saying the truth, East-West relations risk once again to be deadlocked. It would mean that the U.S. Administration is engaged in delicate maneuvers to recoup what President Reagan had perhaps conceded somewhat hastily in Reykjavik. That possibility cannot be excluded: since the latest Reykjavik bilateral 'summit', the White House has been busy adjusting its position."

Rosten concludes: "To a certain extent, the acknowledgment of failure made Thursday in Vienna seems to confirm that Mr. Gorbachev came out better from the Reykjavik summit to the extent that he seems to have obtained more concessions than he himself has made."

To Pol Mathil, on the contrary, Gorbachev's position is untenable. Mathil writes in independent Le Soir (circ. 224,000): "As far as (Gorbachev's) position on the domestic scene is concerned, the outcome of his five hundred days of diplomatic offensive are completely disappointing. He did not bring anything back from his two summits with Mr. Reagan: he did not obtain the reduction of arsenals that would have enabled him to find the means to reactivate the economy."

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